

News

NEANDERTAL CONSORTIUM MEETING

Dubrovnik, 20–24. February, 2009



Between 20th and 24th of February 2009 an international meeting of the Neandertal consortium was held in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Professor Svante Pääbo, director of the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology conducted the meeting organized together with the Institute for Anthropological Research in Zagreb. The meeting is a result of a collaboration between the two aforementioned institutes, the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss current results of the research on Neandertal genome and the forthcoming publication of it. At the meeting, numerous scientists from several countries were present, including researchers from the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology (Germany), University at California at Berkeley (USA), European Bioinformatics Institute (UK), National Human Genome Research Institute (USA), and the Institute for Anthro-

pological Research (Croatia). Present at the meeting were (in alphabetical order): A. Ayinuer, A. Briggs, H. Burbano, A. Butthof, Z. Duraković, M. Fritz, Q. Fu, J. Good, E. Green, B. Hoerber, B. Hoeffner, I. Janković, J. Jensen, P. Johnson, M. Kircher, J. Krause, M. Lachman, A.-S. Malaspinas, T. Maričić, M. Meyer, S. Missoni, J. Mullikin, S. Pääbo, N. Patterson, V. Pribacić, K. Pruefer, S. Ptak, A. Riley, P. Rudan, M. Siegemund, U. Stenzel, J. Šarac, T. Šarić, A. Tomljenović, C. Verna, J. and J. Visagie.

The meeting was also an opportunity to visit the newly formed Anthropological Center of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, lead by Professor Pavao Rudan, full member of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts. The Center is situated in a beautiful building of the former monastery of St. Jakov in Dubrovnik, established in the year 1222, although most of the building's appearance today stems from the 16th century renovation.

Saša Missoni and Ivor Janković

35th SCHOOL OF BIOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

»Biological Anthropology of Health in the 21st Century: From Describing Variation to Understanding Determinants«

July 10, 2009, Zagreb, Croatia

Biological anthropology in the 19th and early 20th centuries played a central role in the scientific description of human variation. During the 20th century the relationship between normal variation and the impact of disease became an important area for research. Particularly after the 2nd World War a global interest in population health and wellbeing, exemplified by the establishment of the United Nations and World Health Organisation, emphasised the importance of understanding the relationship between human variation and disease.

During the last 50 years, and largely as a result of the establishment of international health organisations, the pattern of health has changed on a global scale. The predominant pattern of infectious disease in the first half of the 20th century has given way to a pattern of non-communicable disease promoted by lifestyle changes. The major elements of this »epidemiological transition« have been changes in diet and physical activity. Easy access to cheap high-energy foods have caused traditional diets, high in fibre but low in fat, to be superseded by a »western« diet high in fat, energy, and carbohydrates but low in fibre. Physical activity patterns have changed as a result of rapid urbanisation, the reduced cost and increased efficiency of both personal and mass transport systems, and increased access to information technology and desk-based occupations requiring minimal physical work.

The result of these two transitions has been an increased prevalence of obesity, Type II diabetes (non-insulin dependent diabetes mellitus – NIDDM), and cardiovascular disease. The risk factors for these non-communicable diseases of lifestyle (NCDs) have been identified during childhood and rapidly increase in importance during adolescence. However, the combination of environmental risk with the normal process of human growth makes the elucidation of these risk factors complex although it is becoming increasingly apparent that the earlier the identification of the determinants of risk the better is the prognosis on terms of intervention to reduce risk through altered dietary and activity patterns. As a result the attention of researchers involved in human growth and population variation has focussed on the early identification of risk for NCDs.

This School will review that relationship from the perspective of developing and developed countries drawing attention to the need to describe human variation and understand the determinants of that variation. Internationally recognised experts have been invited to share their experience and findings in both developed and de-

veloping countries. In particular they will discuss the requirements, in both research design and statistical analysis, that provide the best opportunity of identifying risk in relation to disease.

Invited speakers

- Professor Noël Cameron (Leicestershire, UK) – »Human Development in Transitional Societies«
- Professor Steve McGarvey (Providence, USA) – »Investigating Population Health and Wellbeing«
- Professor Leslie Sue Lieberman (Orlando, USA) – »Global Nutritional Transitions and the Rise of Childhood Obesity«
- Professor Nick Mascie-Taylor (Cambridge, UK) – »Understanding the Impact of Infection on Child Development«
- Professor Ranjan Deka (Cincinnati, USA) – Lecture topic to be announced
- Professor Larry Schell (New York, USA) – »Environmental Pollution and Child Development«
- Dr. Ellen Demerath (Minneapolis, USA) – »Investigating the Genetic Basis of Population Health«
- Dr. Mattieu Roelants (Leuven, Belgium) – »Use of References and Standards to Assess Risk«
- Dr. Zoë Sheppard (Leicestershire, UK) – »Analysing Social and Economic Determinants of Health«

Organizers

- Croatian Anthropological Society (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Institute for Anthropological Research (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Croatian Medical Association (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences (Zagreb, Croatia)
- IUAES Commission on Medical Anthropology and Epidemiology
- Child Growth Foundation (London, UK)

Course directors

- Professor Noël Cameron (Leicestershire, UK)
- Professor Pavao Rudan (Zagreb, Croatia)

For more information please contact

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29th ANTHROPOLOGY AND HEALTH WORKSHOP

»Developing Research Design and Analysis Models to Study Determinants of Health and Wellbeing«

July 11–17, 2009, Dubrovnik, Croatia

Organizers

- Child Growth Foundation (London, UK)
- Croatian Anthropological Society (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Institute for Anthropological Research (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Croatian Academy of Arts and Sciences (Zagreb, Croatia)
- IUAES Commission on Medical Anthropology and Epidemiology
- Women's Research Center, University of Central Florida (Orlando, FL, USA)
- Course Directors
 - Professor Noël Cameron (Leicestershire, UK)
 - Professor Pavao Rudan (Zagreb, Croatia)
- Professor Ranjan Deka (Cincinnati, USA)
- Professor Larry Schell (New York, USA)
- Dr. Ellen Demerath (Minneapolis, USA)
- Dr. Mattieu Roelants (Leuven, Belgium)
- Dr. Zoë Sheppard (Leicestershire, UK)

Lecturers

- Professor Noël Cameron (Leicestershire, UK)
- Professor Steve McGarvey (Providence, USA)
- Professor Leslie Sue Lieberman (Orlando, USA)
- Professor Nick Mascie-Taylor (Cambridge, UK)

General information

The conference will last six full days in the Anthropological Center of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Dubrovnik. Each day, four to six one-hour lectures will be presented by invited speakers during morning and afternoon sessions that will be followed by extensive discussions of the participants. There will be no parallel sessions and every participant will be able to follow all the lectures. The lecture pattern will remain flexible and will be determined by specific requirements. The working language will be English.

For more information please contact:

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